

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and members of the Judiciary Committee my name is Mellody Massaquoi. I am an ally and support of the [Community First Coalition](#). I am submitting testimony on a variety of bills today. What's most important is that committee members reconsider the validity and usefulness of many of the bills introduced today. I offer my support for:

**In Support: S.B. No. 387**

We offer our support for Sec. 5. Specifically, we endorse the codification of the collection and reporting of data that reflects a myriad of important information of when a police officer engages any person in a traffic or pedestrian stop. However we urge the committee to strengthen the language so that police interventions in schools are collected and reported on in the same exact way. This is because we know there are thousands of police-led interventions in schools each year that go uncatalogued.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, this committee should add additional language that models the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee recommendations that would lead to increased community ownership of school-based 9-1-1 call data so that students, parents, and credible community messengers can be fully aware of the reasons, frequency, and for whom police are being called to schools for.

**In Opposition to legislation that increases electronic monitoring and/or GPS Monitoring:  
H.B. No. 5417, H.B. No. 5418 & S.B. No. 365 and S.B. 16**

We are vehemently opposed to any legislation that increases the electronic monitoring and/or GPS surveillance of youth, especially Black and Brown youth or adults in our communities. These types of technologies *“are engineered to guarantee that a person who was criminalized in the past or present will, by design, continue to be criminalized in the future, whether or not they break any laws. Since a key feature of our legal structure is to separate out and exclude people, law enforcement oriented data-driven technologies are designed to ensure that targeted people fit into criminalized categories that justify exclusion under and beyond the law.”*<sup>2</sup>

**In Opposition to legislation that increases support and training for law enforcement personnel to apply for detention orders for youth accused of crimes.  
S.B. No. 365 and H.B. No.5418:**

Any increase of support, including training of any kind for police officers to apply for detention orders will lead to an increase of youth in our community being placed in prisons or prison-like conditions.

**In Opposition to legislation that increases the likelihood that youth are transferred into the adult criminal justice system or proceedings.**

**S.B. No. 365 and H.B. 5418:**

The campaign to criminalize Black and Brown youth by making it more likely they are treated as adults is one of the ways the school-to-prison pipeline is codified. These types of recommendations disregard the science of child and brain development and are seated in a formula derived from *“the superpredator myth [that] included the largest*

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<sup>1</sup> School Cops: Few Arrests? Too Many Calls?; New Haven Independent: [School Cops: Few Arrests? Too Many Calls?](#) Waterbury Town Hall on Policing: Police Chief Spagnolo states 1,100 mediations for 2019-20 (six months of school): access via <https://www.facebook.com/191587517525677/videos/334421440877611> at minute 14:17

<sup>2</sup> THE INVISIBLE MACHINERY OF DATA CRIMINALIZATION, by: Puck Lo. Contributions from: Ana María Rivera-Forastieri, RAD (Tim Stallmann, Chris Schweidler and billy dee) and Dalia Rubiano Yedida, accessed via: <https://abolishdatacrim.org/en/report/full>

*expansion in history in the U.S. prison population, which increased by more than one million between 1980 and 2000.<sup>3</sup>*

**In Opposition to legislation that increases the likelihood of children being placed in detention facilities, and the sharing of juvenile records to facilitate incarcerating children.**

**H.B. 5418:**

Under no circumstances can we or should you accept the conditions this bill creates for children. Our young people's welfare and confidential records should be protected at any and all costs. The moral outrage we have for the recommendations that potentially strip Fourth Amendment rights from children so that they can be more easily locked up, even for as little as six hours, is literally unspeakable in this forum.

It is for these reasons and more we hope this committee and its members decide to protect children and keep them out of prisons at all cost.

Sincerely,  
Mellody Massaquoi  
203-833-3802

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah Lawrence & Jeremy Travis, *The New Landscape of Imprisonment: Mapping America's Prison Expansion* 1 Research Report of the Urban Institute, Washington D.C. (2004).